Queen’s Park School Food Policy

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Introduction

At Queen's Park Primary we are committed to helping children develop a positive, balanced, and confident relationship with food. We recognise that food is more than just fuel, it's part of culture, social connection, identity, and enjoyment. Through effective leadership and a strong school ethos, we take a whole school approach by bringing all elements of the school day together to support the health and wellbeing of all children. We recognise that we are invaluable role models to pupils and their families regarding food and drink choices and healthy living.

Policy implementation date: March 2026
Signature[s]:

This policy will be reviewed annually to incorporate any new developments.

Policy Aims & Objectives

Our school food policy aims to…

- Ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition promote the health and well-being of pupils, staff, and visitors at our school.
- To positively influence the health of the pupils and staff through education, increasing their knowledge and awareness of what is a healthy and balanced diet, hygienic food preparation and storage methods.

The objectives of our school food policy are to:

- Provide a range of balanced food choices throughout the school day that are in line with the mandatory school food standards.
- Ensure that food provision in the school reflects the cultural and medical requirements of staff and pupils.
- Ensure that our caterers uphold high standards and continue to actively consult with relevant stakeholders to improve the food provision.
- Work with students and the catering company to make sure the pupils feel listened to and see their choices in the food on offer.
- Support parents to manage food intake outside of school.

Policy Development

This policy was developed collaboratively by:

- Melissa Royle (Head of School), governors, caterers, pupils and the Nourish team.
- We have a school food ambassador group that contributes to ongoing review and planning of food activities across the school.

Food culture & role modelling

At Queen's Park we believe that building a strong food culture begins with leadership. The way food is spoken about, modelled, and valued by adults in school directly influences how children relate to food. We are committed to creating an environment where nourishing food is celebrated, and positive eating habits are supported throughout the school day.

Commitments

Leadership and Staff Role Modelling: All staff including SLT, teachers, teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, kitchen staff, and club leaders – are expected to model curiosity and positive attitude towards food. This includes: eating with pupils, speaking about food using neutral, inclusive language, and showing a willingness to try new foods. Staff are offered training to support this approach.

Governance and Compliance: We follow the School Food Standards (SFS). [Appendix 1] A named SLT lead Melissa Royle, Head of School is responsible for compliance, supported by kitchen leads and monitored termly with school governors. Where possible, a School Nutrition Action Group (SNAG) will include pupils, staff, and governors in reviewing and improving food practices.

Positive Language Around Food: Staff are encouraged to avoid terms such as "good," "bad," "junk," or "treats" when discussing food. Instead, we promote a neutral and balanced approach, focusing on how different foods support our health, energy, and well-being. Our aim is to move away from diet culture language and instead highlight how food helps us feel and function (e.g., "this gives us energy to run and play").

No Food as Reward: We do not use food as a reward or incentive. Research shows this can harm children's relationship with food and encourage overeating or emotional eating. At our school, we reward pupils by: Certificates and recognition in assemblies, dojo points, dojo parties, stickers or special activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- SLT will observe lunch/snack times termly, focusing on adult modelling and food-related language.
- Pupil, parent, and staff feedback will inform improvements annually.
- Annual training will cover key topics like food neutrality and inclusive language.
- Governors will receive a termly update on policy implementation.

- All clubs and external partners (e.g., breakfast, after-school, holiday clubs) will be expected to align with this policy.

Food Provision & Dining Environment

We are committed to providing a variety of nourishing meals, aligned with the School Food Standards, in a welcoming environment that supports autonomy, inclusion, and enjoyment.

Breakfast club

We offer a breakfast club which serves a range of nutritious food (including wholemeal carbohydrates, fruits & protein-based foods) to support children's health and concentration to ensure they have energy for learning, play and social interaction.

Our breakfast club is run internally by staff and the Head of School monitors to ensure the food served complies with the School Food Standards, which falls under the section, 'Food other than lunch' [Appendix 1]. Our School Council and School Food Ambassadors consult with the children which has contributed to menu changes.

Lunchtime offer

Our school meals are offered free to all children and are provided by Caterlink. The menu is revised and adapted 3 times in the year – Autumn, Spring and Summer. Our menu strictly contains no nuts and is bronze halal to cater for needs of our Muslim community. Our catering company also offer termly tasting menus for the parents so their views can be collected and considered to ensure the food meets the needs of the school community.

Packed Lunches

Packed lunches include those brought from home as well as those provided by the school for trips.

We encourage parents to provide healthy, well-balanced packed lunches as per our guidance on our school website under Packed Lunch Policy

The packed lunch guidance is shared regularly via parents' newsletters throughout the year as well as during Parent Conferencing.
Important parts of our policy to note are:

- No chocolate / nuts
- No crisps
- No fizzy/energy drinks
- Water or milk only
- We expect children to be given a balanced meal if food is brought in from home.

After -School Club

Our after-school club is run internally by members of staff known to the children. Children are provided with a snack at 4.45pm and this menu complies with the School Food Standards, which falls

under the section, 'Food other than lunch' [Appendix 1]. Our School council and School Food Ambassadors consult with the children which has contributed to menu changes.

Children can bring their own snack in for after school club but it must comply with the guidance in our packed lunch policy.

Our menu is shared with all parents who attend our after-school provision.

School Food Standards (SFS) Compliance

We ensure our menus comply with School Food Standards (SFS) [Appendix 1] across all food provided in school. This includes breakfast clubs, lunch service, afterschool club offer, and break time. Melissa Royle (Head of School) is responsible for ensuring ongoing compliance in partnership with catering teams.

Fruity Desserts

To ensure balance within our lunch offering, we offer a range of nutritious dessert options. This includes days where we serve fresh fruit and yoghurt, cheese, and crackers or a 50% fruit-based dessert.

Water-Only School

To encourage proper hydration while reducing the intake of sugary drinks our school permits only water and milk throughout the school day.

We promote drinking water by providing accessible water fountains, allowing refillable water bottles in class, incorporating water breaks, or using visual reminders to encourage regular hydration.

Dining Environment

We are committed to creating a calm and positive dining experience. This includes:

- Reducing noise and queue times
- Having staff eat with pupils when possible
- Offering opportunities for choice and autonomy (e.g., self-serve salad bar)
- Using language that encourages children to listen to their appetite signals.
- Ensuring the dining area is welcoming, clean, and promotes social interaction and inclusivity.
- Providing adequate time for children to enjoy their meals without feeling rushed.
- Involving pupils in aspects of mealtime planning and feedback, helping them feel ownership over their dining experience.
- Students who eat their vegetables or finished a balanced food plate are given a sticker.

SEN Support: Our dining environment is inclusive of pupils with sensory, physical, or emotional needs. This may include:

- Flexible seating options
- Noise-reducing strategies
- Visual menus or food introduction strategies

Celebrations and Events

Celebrations in school reflect our food ethos and are inclusive of all pupils. This applies to the following occasions:

- Breaktimes
- Parents evenings
- Sports days/events
- School council meetings
- Exam or test days/weeks
- End of term
- School trips
- Birthdays.

At Queen's Park, we believe all children should feel equally celebrated on their birthdays and special occasions. For this reason, we kindly ask that families do not bring in cakes or sweets to share in class. While well-intentioned, this can create inequity, as not all families are able to contribute in the same way and also raises concerns around allergies and dietary restrictions. Instead, we encourage other meaningful and inclusive ways to celebrate, such as:

- Extra playtime or a special activity chosen by the birthday child
- Wearing a birthday badge, hat, or sash for the day
- A classroom cheer or birthday song
- Having their photo featured on a birthday display board
- Choosing a story to be read to the class
- Leading a class game or being the helper for the day
- Receiving a birthday certificate or card from the class or teacher
- A non-food treat from the school (e.g. sticker, pencil, bookmark)

As we understand parents and children like to bring something to share on their birthday, we do allow fruit kebabs or other healthy options.

We also strive to ensure that nutritious food and drink options are available at the following school events and celebrations:

- Fundraising events
- Seasonal celebrations [Christmas, Easter, Eid etc.]
- Summer and winter fair
- International events/Cultural week
- Charity weeks: E.g., Macmillan coffee morning

Food Education

Food education plays a vital role in helping children develop confidence, curiosity, and a lifelong positive relationship with food.

Cooking and Nutrition is a statutory part of the Primary Design and Technology curriculum [see Appendix 1] and is taught at an age-appropriate level throughout each key stage. Children are given opportunities to explore nutrition, health, and food origins through engaging and practical learning experiences.

Key learning outcomes include:

- Understanding that all food originates from plants or animals
- Identifying and sorting foods into the five groups of the 'Eatwell Plate'
- Recognising the importance of eating at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day
- Preparing simple dishes safely and hygienically, without the use of heat
- Developing practical skills such as cutting, peeling, and grating

As pupils progress, they also learn:

- That different foods are produced in various regions of the UK, Europe, and the wider world
- How seasonal changes impact food availability
- How food is processed into ingredients that can be used in cooking

These lessons are designed not only to build essential life skills but also to deepen pupils' understanding of food culture, sustainability, and positive food choices.

Queen's Park also has a free gardening club for children, so they have an opportunity to learn and grow their own food. Where possible we offer opportunities to children across all year group to harvest and use the food in their Design and Technology lessons. We start this from a young age with our youngest pupils in Nursery and Reception growing their own fruits and vegetables and picking them to eat when ripe.

Teacher Training and Support: Teachers are supported through CPD to confidently deliver food education that reflects age-appropriate, inclusive, and culturally relevant content. Training includes guidance on how to talk to children about food, sessions with the school gardener and other outside agencies to understand how to grow produce which can be used in the curriculum.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Pupil voice is used to shape future food education activities
- Teachers reflect annually on curriculum strengths and gaps

- Family engagement is used to extend food education at home (e.g., newsletters, workshops)
- Impact is evaluated through confidence, participation, and enjoyment rather than consumption
- Celebrations are discussed with pupil councils and staff to ensure alignment
- Clubs and PTA-led events follow the same principles as the core school day

Policies implementation date: March 2026

Signature[s]:

Appendix

Appendix 1:

The revised standards for school food came into force on 1 January 2015 and are set out here:

School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Appendix 1

National Curriculum - Design and technology key stages 1 to 2 (publishing.service.gov.uk)